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October 2011



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Depression Club & the Hug-Based Initiative

Depression Club was a failure. The ground rules were simple: if you were prone to depression, and would commit to a six-month membership, club members would cheer you up as needed. On any day you were feeling happy, you would return the favor. Trouble is, depressed people don't want other people in their business. Within one week, everyone in Depression Club claimed to be OK, but none of them were.

The follow-up was the "Hug-Based Initiative." Somehow, we would cheer each other up by hugging. There were no specifics and no commitments. And it worked great. Within the first day, dozens of hugs were exchanged, most of them in mockery of the initiative. Turns out, what mopey young New Englanders need to get them over the hump, hug-wise, is ironic distance. When you're not offering a hug, but "offering" a "hug," it's much easier to offer a hug, and to accept one. Don't despair. (Mike Benedetti)

Salt for the Unsalted

BY BRUCE "SNOW GHOST" RUSSELL

Dear Bruce: Is he scary?

He couldn't scare anyone if he was wearing the scariest pair of socks in the drawer.

Dear Bruce: Are you sure?

You know how to be sure? Go down to the South Shore to buy insurance and be assured.

Dear Bruce: How are you?

I just got one thing to say: That one thing about the Snow Ghost that hasn't already been said by the Snow Ghost, has already been said by the Snow Ghost.

[Editor: Say that again?]



Anything that's been said, about the Snow Ghost, hasn't been said, except only by the Snow Ghost.

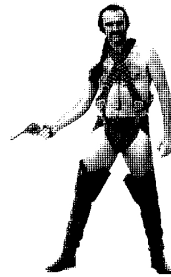
[Can you say that one more time?]

Well the only thing it says about the Snow Ghost, that hasn't already been said by the Snow Ghost.

[Alright, how about we end it there?]

Ghost it up!

Towel mural, High Street, Worcester. Photo by Anna Lantz.



Movie Review: Zardoz

by Asa Needle

Okay so I couldn't finish the thing, but what I did watch of it made a deep impression on me. The script is especially THE PENIS IS EVIL memorable and hard to get out of your THE PENIS IS EVIL head. It's so over-the-top, I can't tell if they're always being serious; I keep expecting John Cleese to walk on and say "Stop it, stop it, this skit is silly!"

Watching Zardoz is like getting messed up in a very foreign country with Sean Connery, who is armed, and is also a half-naked rapist. Throw in Immortals, Exterminators, Barbarians, and a house-sized tiki mask with a Freudian bone to pick, and you've got yourself a movie. It's tough going. I might have to watch it over several months in sixty-second installments to prevent my brain from overloading.

Director John Boorman almost made *The Lord of the Rings*, even corresponding with Tolkien about it. I'd have loved to see the Zardoz aesthetic applied, perhaps with Elijah Wood in a fluorescent red tankini, and a reinterpretation of the elf/orc classist dichotomy.

Though perhaps not a first-date kinda movie, Zardoz would be perfect for teaching comprehension to high schoolers.

Discussion Questions

1. Is Connery's role best described as melodramatic, tragicomic, or a questionable career choice?
2. Is rape all cool if Zardoz tells you to do it?
3. THE PEEENIS IS EEEVIL! Explain.

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Book Review: Black Beauty

Black Beauty, written in 1877 by Anna Sewell, is a story told by a horse that chronicles his life from colt to old age. He tells tales of his work through many types of jobs and owners, both loving and cruel. Along the way, he meets many other horses, each having unique experiences with humans to share.

My favorite thing about *Black Beauty* is the values it passes on to readers. It points out the neglect that many animals experience during their lifetimes, and the importance of including them in the teachings of treating others with compassion and respect. After all, a person's character can be ascertained by their treatment of those in greatest need. For animal and people lovers alike, a great story is found in this book! (Maureen Kelly)

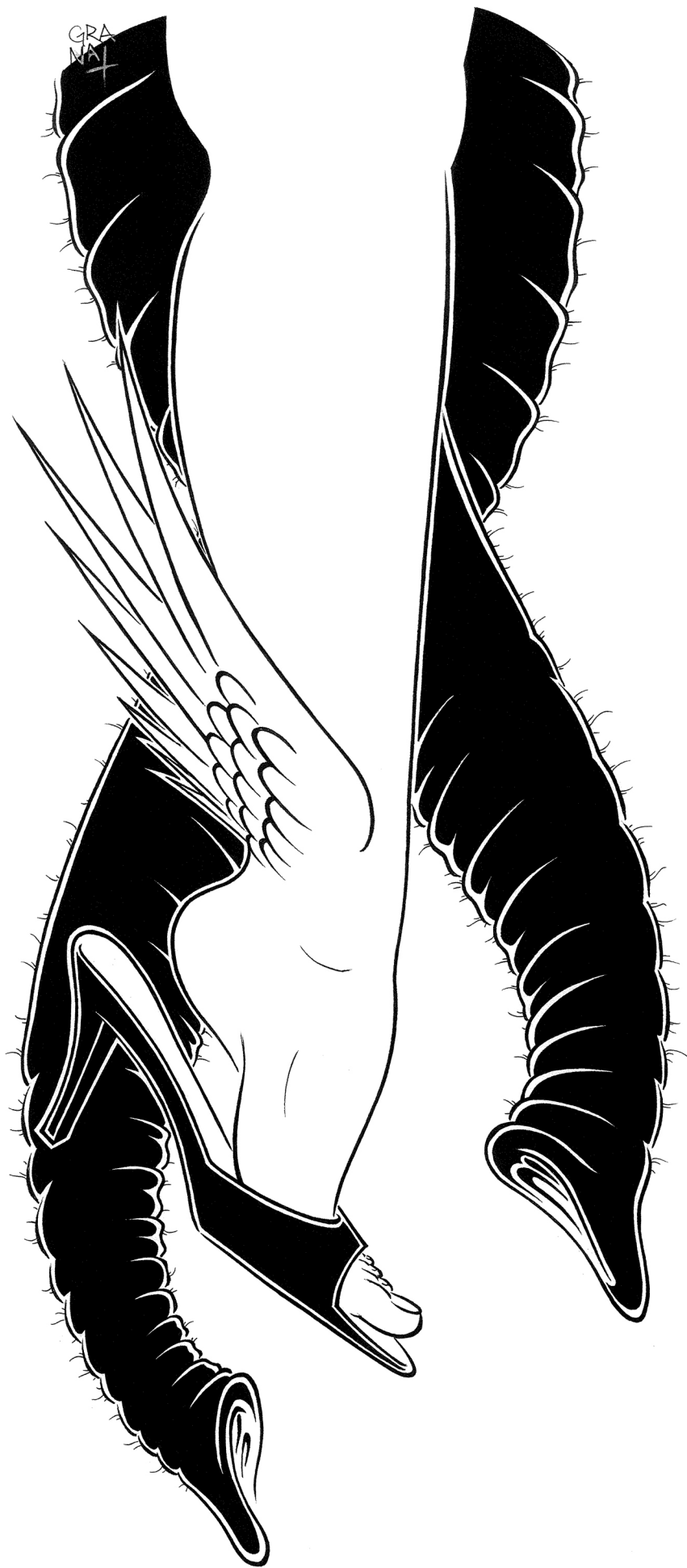
HAPPINESS PONY Income Statement September 2011

| Revenue | |
|------------------------|---------|
| Donations from editors | \$78.10 |
| Ad sales | \$0.00 |
| Other donations | \$3.00 |

| Expenses | |
|------------------------|---------|
| 180 paper copies | \$33.50 |
| 20 laminated placemats | \$47.60 |
| Test copies | \$0.00 |

| Net Income | \$0.00 |
|------------|--------|
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Happiness Pony is a free monthly newspaper published in Worcester, Massachusetts, dedicated to promoting ponies & happiness. This issue was edited by Patricia Kirkpatrick & Mike Benedetti.



Hermes

One night in Arcadia on Mount Cyllene, a new Olympian god was born into the pantheon: Hermes. The day he was born, he invented the lyre. Later that day, he snuck onto Apollo's farm to steal his cattle. He walked them backwards towards Greece so their tracks would show them moving in the opposite direction. When caught, he appeased Apollo by playing the lyre, and got off scot-free.

Hermes is not only a trickster; he is a bringer of good luck, searcher of things lost and stolen, and the patron of athletic ability, intelligence, language, speech, metaphors, messengers, and thievery.

His primary role is messenger for the gods, delivering communications to mortals. His winged shoes

enable realm, he likes to assist travelers, runners, the mischievous, and people in need of luck. When mortals die, he helps them navigate the afterlife and find their way to the underworld.

We remember Hermes in the English words hermeneutics and hermaphrodite. The latter comes from the story of his son, Hermaphroditus, who slept with a nymph in a pool. The nymph then wished that they would never be separated, and her request was granted—literally. They became one, and Hermaphroditus became both a male and female being.

Next time you're having a rough day, give Hermes a mental call, and see what drops in your path. (*words by Maureen Kelly; art by Tooth Granat*)